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US Department of the Interior News Briefing



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DOI In The News

Zinke To Complete Review Of National Monuments This Week.

The [Washington Post](#) (8/22, Eilperin, Levine) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke this week will conclude his review of 27 national monuments as directed by an executive order signed by President Trump this spring targeting "designations of at least 100,000 acres that were made by former presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama under the 1906 Antiquities Act." Zinke has announced that "he would recommend no changes for six of the monuments on the list." Fifteen of the remaining sites "are considered the most vulnerable to revision, reduction or even reversal."

Additional coverage was provided by the [AP](#) (8/23), the [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (8/22, Landers), the [Bakersfield \(CA\) Californian](#) (8/22, Mayer), and the [St. George \(UT\) Spectrum](#) (8/22, DeMille).

Groups Make Last-Minute Push To Save National Monument Areas. The [AP](#) (8/23, McCOMBS) reports that "conservation groups are airing TV ads, planning rallies and creating parody websites in a last-minute blitz to stop Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke from downsizing or eliminating national monument areas that cover large swaths of land and water from Maine to California." Meanwhile, "groups that want to see the areas reduced have been less vociferous, pleading their cases on social media and working behind the scenes to lobby federal officials."

Coverage by the AP was also picked up by [Philly \(PA\)](#) (8/22, McCOMBS), the [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (8/22, McCOMBS), the [Washington Post](#) (8/23, McCombs), [ABC News](#) (8/23, McCOMBS), the [Albuquerque \(NM\) Journal](#), the [Bristol \(VA\) Herald Courier](#) (8/23, McCOMBS), and the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (8/22, McCOMBS).

Trump Wants To Turn National Monuments Into 'Industry Playthings'. The [Washington Examiner](#) (8/22, Siciliano) reports Raul Grijalva, the ranking Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee, released a report saying the Trump Administration's review of 27 national monuments is being guided by the energy industry, rather than the public interest. The executive summary of the report said, "This report demonstrates that the justification provided for the review – a desire for robust public input – is a diversion meant to obscure the review's true aim: the development by private companies of fossil fuel resources currently off-limits due to monument designations."

100 Supporters, Four Local Members Of Congress Blast Trump's Review Of National Monuments. The [Pasadena \(CA\) Star-News](#) (8/22, Scauzillo) reports that "four local members of Congress blasted" the President Trump's order to review national monuments, "calling the president's

action a nod to corporate greed." Democratic Reps. Judy Chu, Jimmy Gomez, Brad Sherman, and Adam Schiff "condemned the White House review, saying the process was part of secret dealings between the administration and oil, gas and mining firms seeking permission to recover additional natural resources from federal lands marked for preservation by previous presidents." Addressing "a friendly crowd of about 100 supporters at the Los Angeles Historic Park near Chinatown, the local representatives spoke in blunt terms, even threatening to block an attempt at monument trimming with legal action."

Also reporting are the [Inland Valley \(CA\) Daily Bulletin](#) (8/22, Scauzillo), the [Pasadena \(CA\) Star-News](#) (8/22, Scauzillo), [Redlands \(CA\) Daily Facts](#) (8/22, Scauzillo), the [San Gabriel Valley \(CA\) Tribune](#) (8/22, Scauzillo), the [Whittier \(CA\) Daily News](#) (8/22, Scauzillo) and [KABC-TV Los Angeles](#) (8/22, Cota-Robles).

Support Rally For Giant Sequoia National Monument Today. [KERO-TV](#) Bakersfield, CA (8/22) reports that the Giant Sequoia National Monument Coalition was scheduled to host a rally Tuesday in support of the monument. Also reporting are [KITV-TV Honolulu](#) Honolulu (8/22), and [WENY-TV Elmira \(NY\)](#) Elmira, NY (8/22).

National Monuments, Sanctuaries At Risk, Huffman Hosts Ocean Forum In Sausalito. The [Mill Valley \(CA\) Patch](#) (8/22, McGuire) reports that on Wednesday, Rep. Jared Huffman will "host a forum on protecting national marine sanctuaries and monuments." The forum will "highlight the benefits of these federal designations for ocean health and coastal economies, including fishing, outdoor recreation, and tourism, and examine the threat of President Trump's Executive Order 13795, which reviews all designations and expansions of National Marine Sanctuaries and Marine National Monuments since 2007."

Roosevelt IV: Interior Secretary Must Defend Public Lands. In an op-ed for the [Houston Chronicle](#) (8/22, IV) [8/22, Check Author], Theodore Roosevelt IV, the great-grandson of the 26th U.S. president, writes that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has "both administrative power and a bully pulpit to encourage sound policy for a huge portion of our nation's public lands." Roosevelt notes that Zinke "often professes his commitment to public land conservation, and he frequently evokes the legacy of TR." However, he argues that Zinke's "conservation actions have failed to match his rhetoric, so far." Roosevelt concludes: "To be a faithful steward of our public lands during the Trump administration will require courage and discipline, attributes that Secretary Zinke values. If he aspires to live up to the Roosevelt legacy, he will need to stand up to special interests and protect America's public lands."

Why Donald Trump Is Going After Our Parks. In a piece for the [Huffington Post](#) (8/22, Pope, Contributor), Carl Pope, Principal Advisor at Inside Straight Strategies, writes "the nature" of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "process may best be illustrated by the fact that during a six month review process, he visited only 8 of 27 monuments – and while the process has been very opaque, the most important consideration being mentioned is whether local Republican politicians favored retaining or stripping protection from the area – the American people, who have filed millions of comments opposing this process, simply don't seem to be a factor in the deliberations." Pope says that Zinke is "acting in spite of the fact that a new major player – native American tribes – are weighing in strongly against opening these lands to mining and abuse because many of the areas at risk, like Bears Ears, were created to protect parts of their heritage, culture and religion." Pope asserts that "it's one of Trump's more revealing policy misadventures."

North Face President: Never Stop Fighting For Our Public Lands. In an op-ed for [USA Today](#) (8/22, Arens), The North Face president Arne Arens writes that "there is a profound value to America's national parks, forests, monuments and other public lands." As Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke completes his review, "we might soon be left with fewer protected places and an uncertain future for our shared lands." Arens adds that his company "has joined with over 350 outdoor companies in a letter to request that Secretary Zinke recognize the benefits that these national monuments provide to sustain jobs and support healthy communities." Arens concludes, "There is a lot on the line: our common ground, the strength of a sustainable economy, and the opportunity to leave a legacy greater than what we are today. Without a doubt, this is worth protecting."

National Monuments In Grave Danger From Trump. In an op-ed for the [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (8/22, Pfund), Nancy Pfund, a co-chair of the Conservation for Economic Growth Coalition, argues that new policies from President Trump and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke are "putting our nation's parks, public lands and national monuments at risk, and our economy along with them." According to Pfund, "rescinding or modifying California National Monuments on the basis of a single 120-day review ending Thursday, and without public hearings and transparent public

debate, would create precisely the kind of uncertainty that our businesses abhor." Pfund asserts that "it also would not follow the law regarding national monuments." She says that "the only way for Secretary Zinke to change a monument is to make recommendations for Congress to act, not the President." Pfund argues that "any proposed recommendations should get the proper procedural and public scrutiny that they deserve, with bills drafted, studied, heard before the appropriate committees, and voted on by those committees and both houses of Congress."

It's Only Been A Year, But The Monument Is Already Benefiting The Katahdin Region. In an op-ed for the [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (8/22, Schmidt), Richard Schmidt III, celebrates the anniversary of the designation of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument by noting "all the benefits the monument is already bringing to Maine and its people, even those few but vocal people who opposed the monument during the years of public discussion prior to its establishment." he says that "traffic is up, both foot and car, on main streets throughout the Katahdin region" and "local businesses are investing, expanding and making improvements to their storefronts and infrastructure to accommodate new visitors and their interests." Schmidt says that "the most compelling indicator of success is the real estate market." Schmidt concludes that "as Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke prepares his recommendations for Katahdin Woods and Waters, we need leaders like Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King, who see and understand the distinct and obvious benefits, to send a clear message to Zinke and the White House."

Community Voices: Sequoia Monument A Treasure Worth Protecting. In an op-ed for the [Bakersfield \(CA\) Californian](#) (8/22, Sheehey), Alison Sheehey, programs director of Sequoia ForestKeeper, argues that Giant Sequoia National Monument is "not large enough to protect many of the unique biological, geological, and historical resources that exist within its parent government land Sequoia National Forest." According to Sheehey, Giant Sequoia National Monument "protects giant sequoias not just at the boundary of the canopies of sequoias, but throughout their expansive root system which includes the aquifer that supports these most massive living things on earth." For this reason, Sheehey argues, "the Monument should be expanded, not shrunk."

Additional Commentary. Additional commentary appeared in the [Pasadena \(CA\) Star-News](#) (8/22, Wilson) and the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#) (8/22, Salazar).

Trump Administration's Reported Threats To Alaska Senators Investigated.

The [Huffington Post](#) (8/23, Shapiro) reports that the Interior Department "confirmed it launched a preliminary investigation into reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke attempted to pressure Republican Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan of Alaska following their votes on health care last month." In a letter to Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. and Rep. Raul Grijalva, sent Deputy Inspector General Mary L. Kendall "wrote that her office was undertaking a preliminary investigation into Zinke's phone calls to the Alaska senators in which the secretary reportedly said Murkowski's votes opposing the GOP's proposed health care plans had put some of Alaska's state-specific projects in jeopardy, particularly those pertaining to energy."

Judge Delays Ruling On Trump's Fossil-Fuel Favors, Fearing Mootness.

[Courthouse News](#) (8/22, Iovino) reports that "a federal judge said Tuesday that the Trump administration improperly delayed a rule to boost state royalties for oil, gas and coal extracted on public lands, but she declined to issue a ruling because an impending repeal might moot the case." California and New Mexico sued the Interior Department "this past April, arguing it unlawfully postponed the new royalties rule on Feb. 22 – six days before the first payments were due and after the rule was set to take effect on Jan. 1." The Interior Department "published a proposed rule to roll back the increased royalty valuations on April 4, with a public comment period ending May 4," and "it's set to take effect on Sept. 6."

Watchdog Group Calls Foul On Leaked Oil And Gas Memo On Sage Grouse.

[Public News Service](#) (8/23) reports that "a document obtained by a watchdog group suggests that the U.S. Department of the Interior could be taking orders from the oil and gas industry." Jayson O'Neill, deputy director of the Western Values Project, "said his group has filed a Freedom of Information Act request for correspondence between energy-industry representatives and staff who worked on Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's sage-grouse review." According to O'Neill, "a memo from the Western Energy Alliance bears a striking resemblance to the federal agency's plan of action." O'Neill said, "Secretary Zinke and the review team took the recommendations of the oil and gas industry, pretty much universally, over other users – which include the hunting community, ranching community, our agricultural communities,."

Outdoor Recreation Creates Economic Infrastructure For Montana.

[KWyB-TV](#) Butte, MT (8/22, Siu) reports that Sen. John Tester on Tuesday announced the creation of the Outdoor Economy Act. The legislation would create a committee at the Interior Department "to advise the presidential administration on ways to increase public access to public lands." Tester said , "Montana hunters, anglers, business owners and outdoor enthusiasts know how important our public lands are. By bringing these folks to the table in Washington, we can ensure that future generations will be able to access the treasured places that are driving our economy and creating jobs."

Military Leaders Consolidate Power In Trump Administration.

The [Washington Post](#) (8/22, A1, Costa, Rucker) reports on its front page that "high-ranking military officials" are "repeatedly winning arguments inside the West Wing, publicly contradicting the president and even balking at implementing one of his most controversial policies." The "military leaders are rapidly consolidating power...as they counsel a volatile president," in "a striking departure for a country that for generations has positioned civilian leaders above and apart from the military." The article notes that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke is among the "military figures serving at high levels in the Trump administration."

Electric Grid Weathers Total Eclipse Of The Sun.

[Politico Morning Energy](#) (8/22, Adragna) reports that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke tweeted he had a "pretty cool view" of the solar eclipse "from his agency's rooftop."

Is Trump Making The Political Environment For Top Civil Servants Worse?

In his [Washington Post](#) (8/22, Davidson) column, Joe Davidson writes that a recent Office of Personnel Management survey shows that "work environment issues are 'the highest contributing factors' in the decision of federal senior executives to leave government" and suggests that the political environment in the workplace – which tops workplace environment issues – "has become particularly toxic since President Trump took office." Davidson argues that the Administration has especially placed pressure on agencies dealing with the environment, pointing to statements by federal agency scientists and others claiming that Administration direction and the President's rhetoric have "damaged the political environment for senior executives and federal employees generally."

Bureau Of Indian Affairs

DOI Hit With Suit Over Tribal Leadership Dispute.

[Law360](#) (8/22, Lidgett) reports that "the Alturas Indian Rancheria hit the U.S. Department of the Interior with a lawsuit on Monday accusing it of improperly recognizing Philip Del Rosa as the chairman of the tribe even though the tribe's General Council barred him from holding office."

Bureau Of Indian Education

Keep The Federal Government Out Of School Choice.

In a [Washington Post](#) (8/22, Burke) op-ed, Heritage education policy director Lindsey Burke, Cato education policy director Neal McCluskey, and Independent Institute research fellow Vicki Alger write that although school choice offers many benefits – granting families more academic freedom, increasing educator accountability, improving academic outcomes – the federal government should not create a nationwide school choice program because "federal control could ultimately impose the same regulations on once-independent schools that have stifled public institutions." They also suggest that the Trump Administration could "propose expanding choice to military families and children attending Bureau of Indian Education schools – the latter deemed the worst-performing schools in the United States."

Bureau Of Land Management

Jury Refuses To Convict 4 In Nevada Ranch Standoff Retrial.

The [AP](#) (8/22, Ritter) reports that on Tuesday, a federal jury in Las Vegas "refused...to convict

four defendants who were retried on accusations that they threatened and assaulted federal agents by wielding assault weapons in a 2014 confrontation to stop a cattle roundup near the Nevada ranch of states' rights figure Cliven Bundy." The AP calls the verdict "a stunning setback to federal prosecutors planning to try the Bundy family patriarch and two adult sons later this year." The jury "acquitted Ricky Lovelien and Steven Stewart of all 10 charges, and delivered not-guilty findings on most charges against Scott Drexler and Eric Parker." The AP notes that "a first trial earlier this year lasted two months and ended in April with a different jury finding two defendants – Gregory Burleson of Phoenix and Todd Engel of Idaho – guilty of some charges but failing to reach verdicts against Drexler, Parker, Lovelien and Stewart."

According to the [New York Daily News](#) (8/22, Brennan), "It was not immediately clear if prosecutors will push for a third trial against Drexler and Parker. Cliven, Ammon and Ryan Bundy and two other defendants are expected to face their own trials in the Nevada standoff later this year."

Also reporting are the [New York Times](#) (8/22, Turkewitz), [USA Today](#) (8/22, Anglen), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/22, Carlton), [Reuters](#) (8/22), and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/22, Etehad, Montero).

Critics Maintain Utah Mustang Meeting A 'Slaughter Summit'.

The [AP](#) (8/23, PRICE, SONNER) reports that "federal scientists and mostly rural interests are gathering at a wild horse conference in Utah that mustang-protection advocates maintain is a thinly veiled effort to promote increased roundups and eventual slaughter of tens of thousands of animals from California to Colorado without public input." The National Horse and Burro Summit kicks off Wednesday in Salt Lake City, "a week after congressional auditors identified countless hurdles but no solutions to the growing number of U.S.-protected wild horses roaming 10 western states." Critics claim "the invitation-only gathering hosted by Utah State University amounts to a 'slaughter summit.'"

Red Rock Canyon Could Raise Entry Fees To \$15 Next Year.

[KTNV-TV](#) Las Vegas (8/22, Jarvis) reports that "a proposed fee increase could raise entry to Red Rock National Conservation Area to \$15 by next year and \$20 by 2023." The Bureau of Land Management is seeking public comments on the proposed increase.

Walter Mondale: We Can't Afford To Get The Mining-vs.-land-protection Equation Wrong.

In an op-ed for the [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (8/22, Mondale), Walter F. Mondale, a former vice president of the United States and former U.S. senator from Minnesota, writes about the importance of protecting the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness from mining. He lauds the Trump administration for "wisely" choosing "to let our professional land managers perform their job and continue the study." According to Mondale, "this is crucial to the well-being of the Boundary Waters and to the sustainable economy of wilderness-edge communities."

Current Petroleum Reserve Plan Is Solid; Don't Fall For Land-Rush Mentality.

In an op-ed for the [Alaska Dispatch News](#) (8/22, Pourchot), Pat Pourchot, who has "served as a senator and representative in the Alaska State Legislature, commissioner of the Alaska State Department of Natural Resources and special assistant to the secretary of the interior for Alaska affairs," writes that the current land use plan for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska was "only just completed in 2013 and has allowed significant on-going oil and gas leasing and development." Pourchot asserts that "the base information and the formulation of the current plan are scientifically sound, in accord with law, and strike a fair and reasonable balance in the treatment of the natural resources owned by all the citizens of this country." He argues that "any changes to the plan should take the deliberative time and effort that went into its original construction."

Bureau Of Ocean Energy Management

Delaware Governor Opposes Offshore Drilling.

The [AP](#) (8/22) reports that "Gov. John Carney (D) says he's opposed to drilling for oil and gas in federal waters off the coast of Delaware, or elsewhere along the Atlantic coast." Carney sent a letter last week to Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke in which he defended the "economic importance of Delaware's coastal areas and coastal activities." The AP adds that "Carney says more than

60,000 jobs support the fishing, tourism and recreation industries in Delaware, and that coast-related activities contribute almost \$7 billion in economic production to the state." The article also points out that "Carney's letter was in response to a request for comments regarding the Trump administration's proposal for a new five-year national offshore oil and gas leasing program."

Also reporting are the [Dover \(DE\) Post](#) (8/22) and the [Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#) (8/22, Goss).

International Association Of Drilling Contractors Requests Expanded Access To Outer Continental Shelf.

[DailyEnergyInsider](#) (8/22) reports that "the International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) recently submitted comments in response to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) request for information and comments on the 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program." The IADC "noted that the U.S. oil and natural gas industry supported more than 10.3 million U.S. jobs and accounted for over 7.5 percent of gross domestic product in 2015." IADC President Jason McFarland said, "It is with these numbers in mind that IADC, along with our industry association counterparts, supports the expansion of available drilling areas in the 5-year leasing plan. We urge Interior Secretary [Ryan] Zinke to expand access to available resources of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in order to further solidify energy security for the U.S. and future job creation and revenue generation."

Offshore Drilling Committee Weighs In On Oil, Beaches.

The [Columbia \(SC\) State](#) (8/22, Fretwell) reports that "the politically sensitive question of whether to support oil drilling off the South Carolina coast sparked plenty of talk Tuesday as lawmakers wrestled with an issue that has divided the state." According to the article, "legislators serving on a special study committee steered clear of endorsing drilling, despite testimony from a university professor and an industry advocate that lucrative oil and gas deposits might lie off the state's coast." Some legislators "openly questioned the need for offshore drilling."

Continuing Coverage: Draft EIS Released For Liberty Offshore Project.

The [Alaska Journal of Commerce](#) (8/22, Brehmer) reports in continuing coverage that the BOEM released the draft EIS for Hilcorp's proposed Liberty Offshore project. Hilcorp, along with its partners BP and Arctic Slope Regional Corp, are planning to build a gravel island in the Beaufort Sea, allowing the companies access to up to 330 million barrels of light crude in place.

Additional Coverage: More Oil And Gas Leases Sold In The Gulf.

Additional coverage that the Interior Department "leased 90 oil and gas tracts covering more than 508,000 acres in federal waters in the central and western Gulf of Mexico last week" was provided by [WGCU-FM](#) Fort Myers, FL (8/22).

Oil Drilling In The Atlantic Threatens Our Economy.

In an op-ed for the [Myrtle Beach \(SC\) Online](#) (8/22, Knapp), Frank Knapp Jr., president and CEO of the South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce, warns that offshore oil drilling threatens the commercial fishing and coastal recreation industries of South Carolina. Knapp writes that "the bottom line is that allowing offshore drilling in the Atlantic equals oil washing ashore and fowling our pristine beaches and coastlines." Knapp warns that "the Atlantic Ocean, its marine animals and our coastal economies will never be the same if drilling is ever allowed."

Fish And Wildlife Service

Guilty Defendants In Oregon Standoff Agree To Pay Back \$78,000.

[Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) (8/22, Wilson) reports that "defendants guilty of occupying the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge have agreed to pay a total of \$78,000 in restitution, according to a motion filed in federal court Monday." The deal is "between the U.S. Department of Justice and 13 defendants who were either found guilty or pleaded guilty to conspiracy to impede federal officers who worked at the refuge from doing their jobs — a felony." U.S. District Court Judge Anna Brown "must sign off on restitution agreement before it's official. She has wide latitude to make changes to the proposal."

Arctic Researchers To Study Wind Effects On Marine Life.

The [AP](#) (8/22, Joling) reports that "a federal research vessel will launch on a cruise this week to study how Beaufort Sea wind affects plant and animal life in a changing Arctic Ocean." The Sikuliaq, "owned by the National Science Foundation and operated by the University of Alaska Fairbanks, will depart Friday from Nome for the trip through the Bering Strait to waters on and off the continental shelf in the Beaufort." The article notes that "researchers from the University of Washington, the University of Rhode Island and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be on board."

Officials Tour Blackwater Marsh Restoration Project.

[My Eastern Shore MD](#) (8/22, Holt) reports that "federal and state officials visited Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Dorchester County Sunday, Aug. 20, to tour the Chesapeake Marshlands project." According to the article, "the \$2.1 million project, though the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Conservation Fund and the National Audubon Society, began in 2016 by spreading more than 26,000 cubic feet of sediment taken from the Blackwater River over 40 acres to elevate the marsh surface near Maple Dam Road." U.S. Fish and Wildlife Chesapeake Marshlands Complex Project Leader Marcia Pradines "said the restoration efforts will benefit the wetland ecology by allowing oxygen to reach plants' roots and improving the health and resilience of marsh." Pradines said, "If we lose these marshes, we lose the unique wildlife that call the salt marsh home, thousands of acres of nursery habitat for juvenile fish and a buffer for local communities against storm surges during hurricanes."

Feds Shouldn't Change Florida Panther Protections.

In an editorial, the [South Florida Sun Sentinel](#) (8/22) "opposes potentially weakening protections for the Florida panther." The paper argues that "instead of making things easier for big land owners, state and federal officials should boost efforts to protect open spaces and save Florida's big cats." The paper concludes that is "more important than ever to bolster, not diminish, protections for Florida's remaining panthers."

Fish And Wildlife Service Offers Reasonable Changes.

The [Kingman \(AZ\) Daily Miner](#) (8/22) editorializes that that "last year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) proposed a lot of major changes on the management of the Colorado River, including the Topock Marsh, which is within the boundaries of the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge." Now, "with a new refuge manager at the helm, the USF&WS is once more soliciting comments from the general public on some management changes they want to make regarding the Colorado River and Topock Marsh." According to the paper, "this time it looks like the changes are way more reasonable and the call for heads to roll within that agency like it did last time may not happen."

America's Beloved Grizzly Bears Are In Trouble, And So Is The Nation's Moral Compass.

In an op-ed for the [Denver Post](#) (8/22, Mattson), David Mattson, a senior visiting scientist at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, criticizes "the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's final ruling to remove Endangered Species Act protections for Yellowstone's 600 to 700 grizzly bears." He notes that "the last three years have seen record-breaking bear mortality, far exceeding any we might expect from numbers of bears in the population." Mattson laments that Fish and Wildlife has "shown remarkable disregard for this and other concerns."

KEN MIDKIFF: Ozark Hellbender's Fate Doesn't Bode Well For Water Quality.

In an op-ed for the [Columbia \(MO\) Missourian](#) (8/22, Midkiff), Ken Midkiff, a member of the city's Environment and Energy Commission and serves on the board of directors of the Great Rivers Environmental Law Center, writes that "like most endangered species, the Ozark hellbender is not a victim of rampant hunting, rather it is a victim of loss of hospitable habitat." However, "for reasons that apparently have to do with preferred foods, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuses to designate the streams a 'critical habitat,' which imposes special protections around the areas where endangered species are found." According to Midkiff, the salamander is important because "it is the 'canary in the coal mine' when it comes to water quality."

National Park Service

Celeb Ambassadors Help National Parks Mark 101st Birthday.

The [AP](#) (8/22, HARPAZ) reports that the National Park Service "marks its 101st birthday Friday amid a 'Parks 101' campaign enlisting celebrities as ambassadors for the park system's hidden gems." According to the article, "this year's effort highlights lesser known treasures that even locals might not know about." Also, "Parks 101 activities and digital content will offer introductions to topics like kayaking 101, battlefields 101 and shipwrecks 101."

In addition, the [Newport News \(VA\) Daily Press](#) (8/22, Reyes) reports that "to celebrate its birthday Friday, the National Park Service is offering free admission to its parks across the country."

Homestead National Monument Of America, Estimates 30,000 Attended Eclipse Events.

The [Columbus News Team \(NE\)](#) (8/22, Kennedy) reports that Homestead National Monument of America officials have "announced attendance figures for the full solar eclipse." According to Superintendent Mark Engler, "an estimated 13,000 to 15,000 people attended the eclipse events, on Monday."

Solar Celebration: Hundreds Gather To Watch Historic Eclipse. The [Salem \(MA\) News](#) (8/21, MacNeill) reports that about 300 people gathered at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site on Monday afternoon for the solar eclipse. The park handed out "250 pairs of viewing glasses — 50 for Junior Rangers and another 200 for the public."

Conservatives: Nix Group Altering Statues.

The [Daily Caller](#) (8/22, Pearce) reports that a conservative group is calling for the Interior Department "to cut ties with a non-profit organization currently raising funds for a National Park Service (NPS) overhaul of the Jefferson Memorial." The Trust for the National Mall "raises private funds for NPS projects on the National Mall, which gives the nonprofit some influence over how the monuments are managed." The conservative group Americans for Limited Government "took issue with some of the most recent renovations scheduled for the memorial — particularly updates to an exhibit on Jefferson's history."

Agency Blames Hackers Over 'F--- Trump' Road Sign In DC Park.

[Fox News](#) (8/22) reports that "authorities are looking into the apparent hack of a road sign in Washington's scenic Rock Creek Park that was emblazoned with a profane message Monday morning about President Trump." According to the article, "the electronic sign was supposed to inform drivers that a local road was closed for sewer work," but "instead, all it said was: 'F--- Trump.'" According to Chief of External Affairs at D.C. Water John Lisle, "the U.S. Park Police may be investigating, as the sign was inside Rock Creek Park — the sprawling 1,754-acre park overseen by the National Park Service."

Blunt Staffer Tours Historic Areas, Expresses Optimism For Legislation.

The [Ste. Genevieve \(MO\) Herald](#) (8/22) reports that "Ste. Genevieve tourism leaders pulled out all stops in showing two of U.S. Senator Roy Blunt's top staffers the town's full array of heritage tourism options on August 15." Trey McKenzie, "Blunt's legislative assistant in Washington, D.C., has moved into position to be involved with the bill to create a National Park Service (NPS) unit in Ste. Genevieve." McKenzie was "joined by Darren Lingle, manager of Blunt's Cape Girardeau office, as they were taken on a tour on the Ste. Genevieve Trolley, visiting the Bauvais-Amoureaux House, the Green Tree Tavern and the Bequette-Ribault House on St. Mary's Road, all of which would be within the boundaries of the proposed park."

Vermont To Recognize Historic LGBTQ Sites.

The [AP](#) (8/23) reports that "Vermont officials are working to recognize historic LGBTQ sites within the state through a National Park Service grant program." Vermont was "invited to participate in the National Park Service's grant program for underrepresented communities on the National Register of Historic Places." State officials will "focus on highlighting significant LGBTQ sites involved in the equal rights movement."

Historic 1830s Potomac Lockhouse To Undergo Rehabilitation.

[Curbed Washington](#) (8/22, Goldchain) reports that over the past few years, Maryland's Swains Lockhouse, "otherwise known as Lockhouse 21, has fallen into disrepair and suffered from run-ins with vandals, according to the C&O Canal Trust." The National Park Service Centennial Challenge Program has "provided a \$100,000 grant to support the rehabilitation of the property." The grant is "also matched by \$108,160, which was raised by the C&O Canal Trust, the Friends of Historic

Great Falls Tavern, and the C&O Canal Association and also supported by Maryland Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen. \$75,000 of those funds were raised by individual donors and a grant from the France-Merrick Foundation."

McCabes, NPS To Sign Hale Lease On Friday.

The [Hot Springs \(AR\) Sentinel-Record](#) (8/22) reports that "after more than three years of lease negotiations, Hot Springs Mayor Pat McCabe and his wife, Ellen, will sign a lease with the National Park Service on Friday to reopen the Hale Bath House as the first, and only, boutique hotel in Hot Springs National Park." The NPS "said in a news release it will sign the lease with Zest Enterprise LLC at 2 p.m. Friday." According to the NPS, "a public open house of the building will follow the signing event to provide the public with an opportunity to see the building prior to its transformation."

'Every Kid In A Park' Coming To Cascades Falls Park For 435 Kids.

[MLive \(MI\)](#) (8/22, Weidmayer) reports that "Cascades Falls Park and the Jackson Civil War Muster will host 435 fourth-graders from Jackson Public Schools as part of an 'Every Kid in a Park' event.' The event on Friday, Aug. 25, is "designed to encourage children to visit and support parks, according to a press release."

Missouri Man Fatally Shot By Arkansas National Park Ranger.

The [AP](#) (8/22) reports that the National Park Service "says a Missouri man was fatally shot by a park ranger in northern Arkansas when he refused to drop a weapon he was carrying." The NPS "says in a news release that 46-year-old Jonathan Bolger of Branson was killed in the shooting early Sunday at Buffalo River National Park." According to the release, "Bolger was carrying a handgun when he was encountered by rangers and that he was shot when he refused to comply with orders to drop the gun."

Teen Missing For 11 Days Found OK In Tennessee National Park.

The [AP](#) (8/22) reports that "a teenager who had not been seen for 11 days has emerged on his own from Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains National Park." Austin Bohanan, 18, "walked out of a remote area in Blount County, about 40 miles south of Knoxville." National Park Service spokeswoman Jamie Sanders "says Bohanan was walking and alert and appeared to be in good condition."

Additional Coverage: Trump Ends Obama's 'Water Bottle Ban'.

Additional coverage that the Trump Administration is "ending a policy implemented by former president Barack Obama that attempted to ban water bottles at national parks" was provided by [Fox News](#) (8/22, Harrington) and the [Daily Meal](#) (8/22, Rock).

Office Of Insular Affairs

Tillerson Notes Signs Of 'Restraint' In North Korea And Hints At Dialogue.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (8/22, Wilkinson) reports Secretary of State Tillerson "on Tuesday voiced a rare note of optimism in the North Korea nuclear crisis, saying ruler Kim Jong Un may be showing signs of restraint that could lead to dialogue." In a State Department press briefing, Tillerson "noted that North Korea had not launched a ballistic missile nor done other 'provocative acts' since the United Nations Security Council voted unanimously on Aug. 5 to impose blistering economic sanctions on Pyongyang." Said Tillerson, "I'm pleased to see that the regime in Pyongyang has certainly demonstrated some level of restraint that we've not seen in the past." Tillerson also "expressed hope that such restraint was 'the beginning of this signal that we've been looking for,'" and added, "Perhaps we are seeing our pathway to some time in the near future to having some dialogue." [Reuters](#) (8/22, Brunnstrom, Torbati) reports Tillerson also said, "We need to see more on their part, but I want to acknowledge the steps they've taken thus far." To [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/22, story 2, 1:45, Holt), meanwhile, Tillerson "offer[ed] an olive branch to Kim Jong-un."

The [Washington Post](#) (8/22, Fifeild) reports, however, reports that "on the second day of the Ulchi Freedom Guardian drills" in South Korea, "which mainly involve computer simulations, North Korea's state media issued another sharp warning to the United States," saying, "The US will be wholly held accountable for the catastrophic consequences to be entailed by such reckless

aggressive war maneuvers." Moreover, [Townhall](#) (8/22, Barkoukis) reported that "North Korea may have called off its plan to attack Guam for now, but it's not backing down from its threatening rhetoric about the US territory." Townhall added that a "recent propaganda video released by the rogue regime shows...Trump looking out over a field of crosses in a graveyard in Guam," and "pictures Vice President Mike Pence engulfed in flames."

[Politico](#) (8/22, Conway) says Tillerson "played a major role in trying to cool tensions earlier this month, after President Donald Trump lashed out after provocations from North Korea, warning that the country would experience 'fire and fury' if it didn't back down." But "despite his efforts, Trump continued making aggressive statements toward Pyongyang."

Office Of Surface Mining

Additional Coverage: Interior Dept.

Halts Study Into Appalachian Mining Technique's Likely Health Hazards. Additional coverage that the Trump Administration has halted a study of the health effects of mountaintop removal mining was provided by [CNN](#) (8/22, Wallace, Marsh, Lamotte), [MSNBC](#) (8/22, Benen), the [Daily Mail](#) (8/22, Kekatos), and the [Sierra \(CA\) Sun Times](#) (8/22).

US Geological Survey

A Second Wind For The North Slope?

[Rigzone](#) (8/22) reports that "following an executive order from U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is in the process of generating updated assessments of the oil and gas resources on Alaska's North Slope in what could be the precursor to an exploration and development boom on federal lands that have mostly been off-limits to the industry." Zinke's executive order has "renewed a sense of hope for opening currently off-limit areas of the National Petroleum Reserve – Alaska (NPRA), and opening the 1002 Area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), which has been tightly closed to the industry since the 1980s, to exploration." Meanwhile, "with a Republican-controlled House and Senate and a president whose no-holds-barred approach to the industry has unleashed a wave of optimism among operators, many believe that Alaska can brightly shine on the industry's maps once again."

Top National News

President Attacks Media, Strongly Hints At Arpaio Pardon In Phoenix Speech.

Immediate coverage of President Trump's Tuesday evening rally in Phoenix paints it as a typically free-wheeling affair, with the President spending about 20 minutes blasting the media, then strongly hinting at a coming pardon for ex-Maricopa County, Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio before a crowd of firm supporters. Media commentators generally took a dim view of the President's words, and some on CNN went so far as to question his mental health.

Don Lemon said on [CNN Tonight](#) (8/22), "What we have witnessed was a total eclipse of the facts. Someone who came out on stage and lied directly to the American people and left things out that he said in an attempt to rewrite history, especially when it comes to Charlottesville. He's unhinged. ... His speech was without thought. It was without reason. It was devoid of facts. It was devoid of wisdom."

CNN political director David Chalian, also on [CNN Tonight](#) (8/22), said, "That was a president totally unhinged. There's little doubt about that for anyone watching. ... This is the evidence that backs up Bob Corker questioning his stability for office. This is the evidence as to why Susan Collins...isn't so sure he may be around to run for re-election in 2020. This is evidence as to why the Republican leader in the United States Senate...is telling people and associates...that he's not sure this presidency is going to fill out the duration of the term."

Republican strategist Rick Wilson said on [CNN Tonight](#) (8/22), "This was a Castro-esque speech in length...by a man who obviously is mentally unstable. ... This is a man who is not well. This is a man who is not qualified or mentally or morally fit to be the President of the United States, and tonight was one more proof of it."

Political commentator Bakari Sellers said on [CNN Tonight](#) (8/22), "We're going to have

discussions about the 25th Amendment, no doubt. I think the President is unfit. I think the President is unhinged. But many of us have known that for 18 months, 19 months, and we're still here now."

The [AP](#) (8/22, Bykowicz) reports that the President "is blaming the media for the widespread condemnation of his response to a Charlottesville, Virginia, protest organized by white supremacists that led to the killing of a counter-protester." He opened his rally in Phoenix "with a call for unity," but "quickly trained his ire on the media, shouting that he 'openly called for healing unity and love' in the immediate aftermath of Charlottesville and claiming the media had misrepresented him. He read from his three responses to the violence – getting more animated with each one."

[KPNX-TV](#) Phoenix (8/23, 10:12 p.m. MST) reported that Trump was "unplugged" as he delivered "a 25-minute tantrum against the media." Trump "spent one-third of his 75-minute speech ripping the 'crooked media' over its coverage of his three statements after the violence in Charlottesville two weeks ago." [KNXV-TV](#) Phoenix (8/23, 10:06 p.m. MST) reported that Trump "wast[ed] no time going after the protests happening outside." Trump "quickly moving on to what happened in Charlottesville."

The AP says Trump also "teased a pardon" for Arpaio, "asking the crowd what they thought of him." Trump then said, "So was Sheriff Joe convicted for doing his job? I'll make a prediction: I think he's going to be just fine." The [Arizona Republic](#) (8/22, Cassidy) reports that last week, Trump "whipped up speculation that he would pardon his political ally at Tuesday's rally." The [Phoenix Business Journal](#) (8/22, Sunnucks) reports that Trump "pretty much assured" Arpaio of a pardon, telling "the populist crowd Arpaio was convicted by a federal judge of contempt of court 'for doing his job.'"

The [New York Times](#) (8/22, Landler, Haberman) also says Trump "all but promised to pardon...the hard-line former sheriff of Maricopa County" who "became a national symbol of the campaign against undocumented immigrants, and whose round-'em-up raids have landed him in legal trouble." [Breitbart](#) (8/22, Mason) runs a brief report under the headline "Trump Hints At Pardon: 'Sheriff Joe Can Feel Good!'"

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/22, Ballhaus, Mann, Lovett) focuses its coverage of Trump's lengthy attack on the media, which he accused of "giving a platform to hate groups" and "fomenting divisions." The [Washington Post](#) (8/22, Wagner, Johnson, Paquette) reports that in his "extended diatribe," Trump "selectively recount[ed] the series of statements he made" after Charlottesville, claiming that the media, "whom he called 'sick people' – refused to report it properly."

The [New York Post](#) (8/23, Jaeger) reports, "Trump spent 20 minutes during [the] raucous rally...reframing his response to the violence in Charlottesville by attacking the media." He "never repeated his controversial 'many sides' remark," and "apologized to the crowd for dedicating such an outsize chunk of his nearly 80-minute speech to defending himself." David Nakamura of the Washington Post [tweeted](#) the crowd "seemed increasingly bored during Trump's media bashing." David Catanese of US News [tweeted](#), "Moving over the hour mark now, lots of Trump folks are trickling out of the Phoenix Convention Center. Speech is too long for them." Catanese also [tweeted a photo](#) of a sparse crowd.

The [Washington Times](#) (8/22, Boyer, Miller) reports that Trump said, "It's time to expose the crooked media deceptions and to challenge the media for their role in fomenting division. And yes, by the way, they are trying to take away our history and our heritage. You see that." That line came in for some criticism on social media. Charles Blow of the New York Times [tweeted](#), "There it is, the racist dog whistle: They're trying to take away our heritage and our history." Actor and activist George Takei, who has 2.6 million followers, [tweeted](#), "Trump in Phoenix: 'They are trying to take away our history and our heritage.' We all know the code he's speaking. Disgraceful." Sahil Kapur of Bloomberg News [tweeted](#), "Paul Ryan said Trump was wrong last Saturday, right on Monday, messed up Tuesday and great yesterday. How does he feel about today?"

[McClatchy](#) (8/22, Ordoñez) writes, "Trump found in Arizona what he is denied in Washington – an adoring crowd that encourages his bluster. And that's exactly what he wanted." McClatchy say the speech was "tailor-made for his voting base." The President "sent an overt political warning to a Republican Congress that has failed to deliver on almost all of the president's legislative goals: you owe the voters some progress." He said, "I have a message for Congress tonight. Your job is to represent American families, American people, American workers. That's your job."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (8/22, Westwood) says Trump "delivered a fiery performance to his base," while [Politico](#) (8/22, Nussbaum) says the President "was back in his natural element"

and "seemed to be reveling in the crowd's love from the moment he entered." John Bresnahan of Politico [tweeted](#), "These rallies are the only time Trump really looks like he's enjoying being president."

Immediate social media reaction was negative. Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA) [tweeted](#), "#PhoenixRally takeaway: @realDonaldTrump would rather divide Americans than keep the government working." Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD) [tweeted](#), "Trump's self-pitying, obsessional and delusional speech hits a new low in mendacity." USA Today's Eliza Collins [tweeted](#), "Text from conservative [congressional] aide on feelings on Trump speech: 'Strikingly uncomfortable, on a number of levels.'"

BuzzFeed senior national correspondent John Stanton [tweeted](#), "The craziest part is that Donald Trump totally think he's nailed it." Washington Post conservative blogger Jennifer Rubin [tweeted](#), "It would be nice if a couple of [Republicans] stepped forward to say this was horrifying, dishonest and raises issue of mental stability."

Dan Rather [wrote on Facebook](#), "Blame the press. Blame President Obama. Insist down is up and up is down. Create an alternate reality. Gaslight. Gaslight. Gaslight. Misquote yourself. Leave out the words that outraged a majority of a nation. ... This was Trump as candidate, uncaged, unscripted, unabashed, and frankly unhinged." University of Tennessee historian Bob Hutton [tweeted](#), "Kinda wondering if the 1933 Nuremberg rally was this rambling and tacky before Leni Riefenstahl edited it for mass consumption."

[The Hill](#) (8/22, Greenwood) headlines its report "Trump Rips Media, Defends Charlottesville Statements At Campaign-Style Rally." [Reuters](#) (8/22, Mason, Coffman) and the [CNN](#) (8/22, Bradner) website also have reports.

ABC and NBC both opened their Tuesday evening newscasts with previews of the rally. On [ABC World News Tonight](#) (8/22, lead story, 3:05, Muir), Tom Llamas reported, "In Phoenix, the red-hat-wearing faithful are lining up here to see President Trump, who ignored a plea from the city's mayor to postpone tonight's rally because emotions were still too raw after Charlottesville." On [NBC Nightly News](#) (8/22, lead story, 2:50, Holt), Kristen Welker reported, "This is President Trump's eighth campaign-style rally since taking office, and it comes as he's been openly feuding with the state's two Republican senators."

Trump Criticizes McCain, But Not By Name. The [Washington Times](#) (8/22, Boyer, Miller) reports, "Trump taunted Sen. John McCain on his home turf Tuesday, repeatedly telling a boisterous rally that they were just one vote away from repealing Obamacare." He did not mention McCain by name, "but the hometown crowd knew exactly who the president was talking about." Trump said, "One vote. Speak to your senator. Please. speak to your senator." [KSAZ-TV](#) (Phoenix (8/23, 10:11 p.m. MST) reported that Trump "criticized both Arizona senators without mentioning them by name." Ben Jacobs of The Guardian [tweeted](#), "Pretty sure Trump has been nicer to Kim Jong Un than John McCain tonight."

Protests Outside Event Generally Peaceful. The [AP](#) (8/22, Billeaud, Silber) reports that "minor scuffles and shouting matches erupted" outside the event. The scene "was noisy, but largely peaceful as Phoenix police kept most members of the two opposing groups behind barricades and apart on separate sides of the street." The [New York Times](#) (8/22, Romero) reports that "thousands of supporters and opponents...shouted at one another, chanted slogans, hoisted placards and complained about the 108-degree heat." Politico's Blake Hounshell [tweeted](#), "Thankfully, Phoenix seems to have been peaceful. Many were expecting some spasm of violence."

[Breitbart](#) (8/22, Spiering) reports that one protester tried to interrupt the President's speech. After the individual was removed, the President said, "You know, they show up in the helmets and the black masks and they've got clubs, they've got everything. Antifa! ... All week they're talking about the massive crowds that are going to be outside. Where are they? Where are they? Well, it's hot out."

Carson Appearance Did Not Violate Hatch Act. The [Arizona Republic](#) (8/22, Harris) reports that HUD Secretary Carson's appearance at the rally "created buzz on social media among those questioning whether the Hatch Act was violated. The short answer: no." While the Hatch Act "prohibits federal executive-branch employees from engaging in partisan political events – like Tuesday's rally" – it "does not apply to the president, vice president or employees appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the US Senate." Carson, Franklin Graham Jr., and Alveolar King were the main speakers before the President took the stage.

Photo Claiming To Show Huge Crowd Tweeted, Then Deleted. The [Arizona Republic](#) (8/22, Hwang, Mitchell) reports that a Twitter account that claims to be an "unofficial account for Republicans in Tennessee" tweeted a photo purporting to show a large crowd arriving for the

rally. The photo was "actually an aerial shot from the 2016 Cleveland Cavaliers parade." The tweet was deleted, but not before being retweeted "more than 800 times and liked more than 1,000 times." The @TEN_GOP account "is not affiliated with the Tennessee Republican Party."

Trump Also Made Stop At US-Mexico Border. The [CBS Evening News](#) (8/22, story 3, 1:55, Mason) reported that before the Phoenix event, "President Trump paid a visit to the border he vowed to secure." CBS' Chip Reid: "In Yuma, Arizona today, President Trump toured an operations center on the Mexican border, where immigration officials showed off state-of-the-art equipment, including a Predator drone. Building a wall on the border was the President's top promise during the campaign. ... But so far, Mr. Trump has failed to convince the Republican Congress to pay for it."

The [Arizona Republic](#) (8/22, Carranza) reports that the President "spent less than two hours near the US-Mexico border on Tuesday, but the intent of his brief visit was clear: Walls work, and it's time to build one along the Southwest border." Trump "never said those words, at least not publicly," during the brief stop, "but his administration was eager to get the word out." The [Washington Times](#) (8/22, Dinan, Boyer) reports that border security officials "said they still need more fencing to help funnel the illegal traffic, and promised to keep pressing enforcement inside the US to convince people they're likely to be deported even if they do breach the border."

The [Yuma \(AZ\) Sun](#) (8/22, Neyoy) reports that local officials "would have welcomed the chance to meet with President Trump...but they missed out on that opportunity." San Luis City Councilman Matias Rosales said, "We weren't invited. In fact, I found out about the visit on Facebook. But I would like to think that he at least flew over the border and saw what the ports of entry are like."

Brady: Revenues From Tax Reform Should Not Necessarily Go To Infrastructure.

The [Washington Times](#) (8/22, Sherfinski) reports that House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady said Tuesday he is examining the idea of using some of the \$2.5 trillion in would-be revenues from corporate tax reform "to pay for lowering rates elsewhere," rather than using the money for infrastructure investments. Brady "said he's listening and working with the White House, and that the two subjects may intersect at some point."

GOP Considers Tax Proposal Allowing \$450 Billion Of Cuts Without Offsets.

[Bloomberg News](#) (8/22, Kapur) reports that a "growing" number of Republicans in Congress are considering a "controversial" proposal "that would allow for about \$450 billion of tax cuts without offsets," according to four congressional aides. Under the measure, Republicans "would not account for things like expiring tax breaks when gauging the budgetary impact of tax legislation – giving tax writers more room for cuts."

Businesses Lobbying For Corporate Tax Cut.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/22, Rubin) reports that large US companies are lobbying senior lawmakers to rally broader support for corporate tax cuts by inviting congressmen to their facilities and pressing employees to contact their representatives. Businesses and Republicans in Congress argue that the cuts would help workers by encouraging investments that lead to long-term wage growth, but unions and some companies say lower rates would be paid by workers in decreased services.

Editorial Wrap-Up

New York Times.

"Trump On Afghanistan: More Of The Same; No End In Sight." The [New York Times](#) (8/22) editorializes, "If there is a compelling case to be made for deepening the United States military involvement in Afghanistan...Trump did not make it in his speech Monday night." President Trump's plan "amounted to a jumble of ideas that lacked detail and coherence and were often contradictory. Having spent years criticizing America's involvement in Afghanistan, he now appears inclined toward an open-ended commitment, but with no real ways to measure success and no hint of a timetable for withdrawal." The Times concludes that "Trump and his administration need to provide many more answers."

"Mr. Trump Sides With Wall Street; You Lose." A [New York Times](#) (8/23, Board) editorial accuses the Administration of persisting "in its efforts to derail the fiduciary rule" regardless of "how arbitrary, capricious and harmful that would be." The Times calls this goal "obstruction,

pure and simple," and suggests the motivation "is fear on Wall Street that consumers and regulators might someday demand similar, customer-first standards for all financial advisers, not just those handling retirement accounts." Regardless of the outcome, the Times concludes, "this much is clear: Mr. Trump has taken sides, and he has chosen Wall Street."

Washington Post.

"Trump's Welcome Self-Correction." The [Washington Post](#) (8/22) editorializes that President Trump's speech amounted to "a rare but welcome story of self-correction," and that the President "deserves credit for changing his position in a way that is likely to displease some of his political supporters." adds the Post, "The US mission in Afghanistan will continue – not because a quick victory is on the horizon; it's not, as Mr. Trump seems to understand. It will continue, because as Mr. Trump also came to understand, the alternative – a quick defeat – would be so much worse."

"The Hard Work Of School Reform Is Paying Off In The District." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/22) writes that a decade of investment in DC Public Schools have yielded encouraging results – "underscored with last week's release of scores on the national Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers" that showed significant gains "across almost all grades and subjects, with all groups of students showing improvements." The Post acknowledges that a "significant achievement gap persists" for minority and low-income students, but applauds the scores overall, which show that the District "remains committed to reform of a public education system that has failed generations of Washingtonians."

"On Gun Violence Research, California Sets An Example For The Nation." In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (8/22) applauds California's recent decision "to advance the science of gun-violence prevention with the establishment of the country's first publicly funded research center." The Firearm Violence Research Center "aims to find effective ways to prevent firearm violence through scientific investigation and understanding." California's decision "to be at the forefront of research on gun violence as a public-health issue stands in contrast to the dismal abdication of the federal government." Legislation passed by Congress in 1996 "barring the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from spending any funds 'to advocate or promote gun control' made the agency skittish about conducting research." The Post argues that "scientific investigation has been key in devising lifesaving solutions to other public-health issues," so "the dearth of research into firearms, a leading cause of death for Americans under the age of 65, is intolerable."

California's State-Funded Research Center To Scientifically Study Firearm Violence.

Wall Street Journal.

"Trump's Afghan Commitment." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/22, Board) argues that opponents of President Trump's new Afghanistan strategy lack an alternative – other than accepting a US defeat.

"Right-To-Work Sore Losers." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/22) writes that the AFL-CIO and its allies on Friday submitted 310,000 signatures to halt new right-to-work legislation in Missouri – despite already having spent more than \$12 million on the previous gubernatorial election on a candidate opposed to right-to-work who lost. The Journal argues that unions in the state will continue to embrace political coercion to collect their dues.

"New York Attacks Success." In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (8/22) writes that Joseph Belluck, the new chair of the committee that approves New York City's charter schools, is hurting successful education in the city by indicating he would not approve new Success Academy schools as long as Daniel Loeb, who recently made what the Journal calls racially insensitive comments, remains on the committee. The Journal acknowledges Loeb's controversial remarks but argues that Success Academy schools have vastly improved education for New York's minorities and that Belluck and New York's authorities have misplaced education priorities to care more about a controversial statement than improving the education of thousands.

Big Picture

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Chevron CEO's Exit Reflects A Changing Of The Guard For Big Oil](#)

[US Readies New Steps To Pressure Pakistan](#)

[Trains In Vain: Epic CSX Traffic Jam Snarls Deliveries, From Coal To Fries](#)

Think Interest Rates Are Going Up? Banks Don't

New York Times:

[McConnell, In Private, Doubts If Trump Can Save Presidency](#)
[What An Afghanistan Victory Looks Like Under The Trump Plan](#)
[At Rally, Trump Blames Media For Country's Deepening Divisions](#)
[For Help In America's Longest War, Trump Tilts Political Balance Toward India Over Pakistan](#)
[Commander Of Naval Fleet To Be Relieved Of Duty Following Collisions](#)
[It's A Diverse City, But Most Big Museum Boards Are Strikingly White](#)

Washington Post:

[US Sets New Sanctions Related To North Korea](#)
[Military Leaders Gain Influence In Executive Branch](#)
['It's Like Everyone Forgot'](#)
[In NJ Suburbs, Football Is Facing An Uphill Struggle](#)
[Trump Implies Pardon Of Arpaio Is Coming](#)

Financial Times:

[Merkel Under Fire For Failing To Defy Trump](#)
[US Sanctions Raise Pressure On China And Russia Over N Korea](#)
[Impact On Farmers Prompts EU Probe Into Bayer's \\$66bn Bid For Monsanto](#)

Washington Times:

[Trump Visits Arizona In Push For Wall Funding, More Border Agents](#)
[Gun Rights Groups Concerned Over Protestors Carrying Firearms At Rallies](#)
[Trump Hits Four Countries With Visa Sanctions](#)
[Adult Sex Toy Industry Sends Sale Proceeds To Planned Parenthood](#)
[Trump Eyes Taliban Talks, Puts Pakistan On Notice In Afghan War Plan](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Arizona Rally; Trump-Afghanistan Strategy; Severe Weather; Weather Forecast; USS John S. McCain-Collision, Search; Barcelona Attacks-New Details; Mnuchin, Linton-Instagram Controversy; Verizon-New Data Plans; Philadelphia-Train Crash; Oklahoma-Escaped Inmates.

CBS: Rob Joyce Interview-US Cybersecurity; Severe Weather; Trump-Arizona Rally; Border Patrol-Job Recruitment; USS John S. McCain-Collision, Search; Trump-Afghanistan Strategy; Afghanistan Strategy-Analysis; NFL-Kaepernick Controversy; Italian Island-Earthquake; Mnuchin, Linton-Instagram Controversy.

NBC: Trump-Arizona Rally; Trump-Afghanistan Strategy; USS John S. McCain-Collision, Search; Severe Weather; Health-Salmonella Outbreaks; Health-Sudden Cardiac Arrest; North Korea, China Sanctions-Analysis; Nautilus Submarine-Reporter Presumed Dead; Italian Island-Earthquake; Transportation-Airline Ticket Prices.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Arizona Rally – 7 minutes, 50 seconds
USS John S. McCain-Collision, Search – 5 minutes, 35 seconds
Trump-Afghanistan Strategy – 5 minutes, 15 seconds
Severe Weather – 3 minutes, 35 seconds
Mnuchin, Linton-Instagram Controversy – 2 minutes, 35 seconds
Italian Island-Earthquake – 45 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Trump-Arizona Rally; US Navy-7th Fleet Commander Relieved; Tillerson-Pakistan Warnings.

CBS: Trump-Arizona Rally; US Navy-7th Fleet Commander Relieved; North Korea-New Rocket Engine Production Orders; Cosby Trial.

FOX: Trump-Arizona Rally; US Navy-7th Fleet Commander Relieved; ESPN Announcer Robert Lee-Reassigned Over UVA Statue Controversy; Louisiana-Kidnapping Incident; Wall Street; Highest Paid Actors 2017; Texas-Tropic Storm Harvey Remnants.

NPR: Trump-Arizona Rally; Senate Russia Investigation-Trump Dossier Firm; USS John S. McCain-Collision, Search; Barcelona Attacks-Suspects; British Columbia-Plateau Fire; Wall Street.

Washington Schedule

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

PRESIDENT TRUMP — Departs Phoenix, Arizona en route to Reno, Nevada; gives remarks to the National Convention of the American Legion; signs the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act; departs Reno, Nevada en route to Washington, DC; arrives at the White House.

VICE PRESIDENT PENCE — Visits Doral, Florida, to meet members of the Venezuelan exile community, recent Venezuelan migrants, other local leaders, and officials to discuss 'the continuing devastation and unrest in Venezuela.'

US Senate: 1:00 PM Senate Commerce Committee field hearing on Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization – Field hearing on 'Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act: Oversight of Fisheries Management Successes and Challenges', with testimony from witnesses including North Pacific Fishery Management Council Chair Dan Hull; Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Sam Cotten; Alaska Board of Fisheries member Reed Morisky; Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division Director Spud Woodward; Pacific Seafood Processors Association President Glenn Reed; Yamaha Marine Group President Ben Speciale; Halibut Coalition President Linda Behnken; Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association Executive Director Ragnar Alstrom; Alaska Marine Conservation Council Deputy Director Shannon Carroll; Alaska Groundfish Data Bank Executive Director Julie Bonney; Marine Conservation Alliance Executive Director Lori Swanson; Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition's Duncan Fields; and American Sportfishing Association Keep America Fishing Director Liz Ogilvie. Location: Kenai Peninsula College, 156 College Rd, Soldotna, AK <http://commerce.senate.gov> <https://twitter.com/SenateCommerce>. Contacts: Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation press 1 202 224 4546.

US House: 11:00 AM Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on DR Congo – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on 'Democratic Republic of the Congo: An Update', with a panel of US Institute of Peace Senior Program Officer for Middle East & Africa Steve Hege, Search for Common Ground Africa Programs Manager Mike Robbins, Amnesty International Africa Advocacy Director Adotei Akwei, and Stimson Center Protecting Civilians in Conflict Program Director Aditi Gorur providing an update on the various dimensions of the crisis in DR Congo and offering options for Congress to pursue in response. Location: Rayburn House Office Building, Rm 2255, Washington, DC <http://tlhrc.house.gov/> <https://twitter.com/TLHRCCommission>. Contacts: Kimberly Stanton Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Kimberly. Stanton@mail.house.gov 1 202 225 3599. This briefing is open to Members of Congress, congressional staff, the interested public, and the media.

Other: 8:30 AM NAPA forum on the GAO's 2017 High Risk List – National Academy of Public Administration forum on the Government Accounting Office 2017 High Risk List, and how federal agencies can successfully resolve GAO's concerns, with keynote from US Comptroller General Gene Dodaro, and panelists including Deputy Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Health for Organizational Excellence Dr Carolyn Clancy, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Material Readiness Kristen French, Office of Personnel Management Principal Deputy Associate Director. Location: George Washington University, 800 21st St. NW, Washington, DC <http://www.napawash.org/> <https://twitter.com/napawash>. Contacts: Betsy Holahan Great Point Strategies bholahan@greatpointstrategies.com. registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

Last Laughs

Late Night Political Humor.

Trevor Noah: [Referencing Trump's new Afghanistan strategy] "I know that he's been President for seven months, but seeing Donald Trump making military decisions is still weird for me. I mean, he must be the first human being in history who gets to command an army after starring in a Pizza Hut commercial."

Trevor Noah: [Referencing Trump's new Afghanistan strategy] "The only problem is, while we know Trump decided to send more troops to Afghanistan, that's pretty much all we know. His actual strategy is like his position on Nazis – unclear."

Trevor Noah: [Referencing Trump's new Afghanistan strategy] "Trump is a problem solver the same way Godzilla is a city planner. ... The only way Donald Trump could consider himself a problem solver is if he stops creating problems. 'You guys are so lucky, I was about to do something, but I stopped myself. Problem pre-solved."

Conan O'Brien: "In his speech on Afghanistan last night, President Trump said, 'Attack, we will.' Then Trump introduced his new military strategist, Gen. Mad Dog Yoda. 'Attack, we will. Destroy, we must.'"

Conan O'Brien: "Before announcing his decision on Afghanistan, President Trump was said to have made a rigorous review of the issue. Yes. Trump said, 'I must have read at least four tweets about it, then I was ready to go.'"

Conan O'Brien: "A lot of protesters at a rally today in Phoenix attended by President Trump and Vice President Pence. A lot of protesters there. Things got awkward when it turned out that the 'Impeach Trump' chants were being led by Mike Pence."

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